

11 January 2008

BLM
Western Oregon Plan Revisions
P.O. Box 2965
Portland, OR 97208

VIA email at <http://www.blm.gov/or/plans/wopr>

RE: Western Oregon Plan Revisions - Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Comments

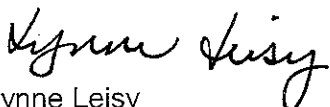
Please accept these comments into the record for the above referenced proposal.

The timber industry claims trees are a renewable resource, and that Oregon will never grow out of trees. Then why is the timber industry always after old-growth trees? Because, unlike other renewable resources, corn for instance, the life cycle of a douglas fir or western red cedar is measured in centuries. It takes hundreds of years to create the complexity of an old growth forest and just days with a chainsaw to destroy it. As Ron Sadler says in the attached, "The scarce resource is the old-growth ecosystem itself." Please read his comments; what Mr. Sadler says is sensible. And remember, trees are the lungs of the planet. Were the effects of deforestation on global warming considered?

The O & C Act of 1937 is in need of an update. As a source of funding to O & C counties, timberland, as with the fishing industry, is no longer reliable. As a natural resource, it can be depleted and the counties must be weaned from this if-y revenue source. Libraries did close in Jackson County and there were department cuts in Coos County, but you know what? People adjusted and survived. The libraries reopened, shorter hours, but open. And in Coos County, cuts in the Sheriff's department did not lead to a crime spree. The environmental cost is unacceptable for a temporary surge of O & C funds. Please read the "Guest Viewpoint" of Joe Kerkvliet and Doug Heiken, attached. They have some thought-provoking views on why the WOPR won't work, most of which I agree with. However, their third reason is large old growth logs have a limited market. That may be true locally; however they did not consider the Asian market, especially Japan. The timber industry should not reap obscene profits from public lands.

As for the Alternatives, the No Action Alternative is perfectly acceptable. It provides some funding to the O & C counties and protects the largest amount of old-growth reserve. In addition it maintains the riparian zones around waterways and setbacks from roads. Erosion and the resulting silting of rivers and creeks are a hazardous problem. Look at the results of prior clear-cutting along Highway 38 along the Umpqua River. So-called economic benefits must never be the trump card to the environment. Economic benefits are short-term. Environmental degradations are long-term.

Do not promote off-highway vehicles as a recreational use! ATV, motorbikes, snowmobiles, etc. are hazards to other recreational users and the forest ecosystem, and a source of noise and air pollution. At the very least, any proposal for off-highway vehicle use should have an extensive and exhaustive EIS.



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